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AUTHOR Jaffee, Kim
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ABSTRACT

In Massachusetts, rehabilitation opportunities are graduated, increasingly intensive, and determined by the number of prior convictions for driving under the influence of liquor (DUIL). Convicted first offenders may choose participation in a 40-hour educational rehabilitation program. Individuals convicted of a second DUIL offense may participate in a 14-day residential treatment program. During fiscal year 1989, the 42 driver alcohol education (DAE) programs for first offenders admitted 16,751 clients, a decrease of 12 percent from fiscal year 1988. Client characteristics remained stable, although first offender drunken driver programs have increased services to women and minorities since fiscal year 1985. Three 14-day residential treatment programs for second offenders admitted 3,995 clients during fiscal year 1989, a decrease of 7 percent from fiscal year 1988. Admissions decreased 29 percent since fiscal year 1986. Client characteristics changed little during the past several years. Breathalyzer test refusals increased for both first and second offenders. Clients admitted to first offender DAE programs were more likely to be women and to be employed than those admitted to second offender programs. Clients in second offender programs showed greater cocaine and marijuana use. (YLB)

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Human Services
Department of Public Health
Divisions of
Alcoholism & Drug Rehabilitation
150 Tremont Street
Boston 02111

Michael S. Dukakis
Governor
Phillip W. Johnston
Secretary
Deborah Prothrow-Stith, M.D.
Commissioner

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Drunken Driver Education and Rehabilitation in Massachusetts

FY '89

Kim Jaffee, M.S.W.
Health and Addictions Research, Inc.

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Drunken Driver Education and Rehabilitation

FY '89

System Overview

Massachusetts has conducted driving while intoxicated (DWI) education and rehabilitation programs for first offender drunken drivers since 1975 and continues to lead the nation in the development of a comprehensive effort to reduce drunken driving and to rehabilitate drunken driver offenders. The system includes license suspension and/or revocation, fines, education and treatment, and incarceration. Rehabilitation opportunities are graduated, increasingly intensive, and determined by the number of prior convictions for driving under the influence of liquor (DUIL).

Convicted first offenders may choose between participation in a 40 hour (16 to 21 week) educational rehabilitation program or a one-year revocation of their drivers' licenses and possible incarceration. There are 42 driver alcohol education (DAE) programs for first offenders licensed by the Department of Public Health, Division of Substance Abuse Services. Offenders pay $504.08 to attend the DAE program in addition to a minimum court fee of $200.

Individuals convicted of a second Driving Under the Influence of Liquor (DUIL) offense incur a two-year license revocation and may either be committed to a minimum sentence of 14 days in a house of correction or participate in a 14-day residential treatment program plus complete one year of outpatient counseling. The program fee is approximately $675 and there is a minimum court fee of $300. The Department of Public Health operates two of the 14-day DUIL programs and contracts with Middlesex County for a third program.

If individuals are convicted of three or more DUIL charges within six years, they lose their driving privileges for five years and must be committed for at least 90 days (180 days if they have four or more convictions) to a house of correction. While incarcerated, offenders may participate in a 90-day treatment program operated by the Department of Corrections. The multiple offender treatment programs are located in three houses of correction specifically for drunken drivers and related offenders.

Admission to First and Second Offender Programs

This report describes admissions to first and second offender drunken driver treatment programs during fiscal year 1989 (July 1, 1988 - June 30, 1989), client characteristics and admission trends over the last five years.

First offender programs. Forty-two DAE programs admitted 16,751 clients during FY '89—a decrease of 12% from 18,971 admissions during FY '88. Table 1 summarizes admission patterns and major client characteristics of clients admitted during the last five fiscal years (FY '85 - FY '89). Client characteristics have remained stable, although compared to FY '85, FY '89 first offender drunken driver programs have increased services to women (15% vs. 13%) and minorities (11% vs. 7%). Over the past three years (FY' 86 - FY' 89) there was an 18% decrease in admissions (See Figure 1).

During FY '89, the average age of clients was 31 years; 85% were male and 89% were white. Over half had never been married (57%) and had no children (58%). Most clients were working (81%) and had an annual income of $15,000 or more (61%). The majority (71%) live with their nuclear or extended family.

Slightly more than three fourths (78%) reported alcohol use in the 30 days prior to intake interview. Current (30 days prior to intake) cocaine (2%) and marijuana (8%) use remained consistent between FY '88 and '89.

Almost one-third (30%) of first offender DAE participants reported that they refused the breathalyzer test, a slight increase over FY '88 breath test refusals (27%). Breath alcohol content readings were below .15 (mg %) for 21% of the clients and .20 (mg %) or greater for 16%. Most participants had one DUIL arrest in their lifetime (88%) and one DUIL conviction in the past six years (97%).

14-Day Residential DUIL Program for Second Offenders. Three 14-day residential treatment programs for second offenders admitted 3,995 clients during FY '89—a decrease of 7% from 4,283 admissions in FY '88. There has been a 29% decrease in admissions since FY '86 (Figure 1). Client characteristics have changed little during the past several years (Table 1). During FY '89, second offenders were mostly male (91%), white (90%), and young (mean age of 32). Over half (56%) had never been married, and three-quarters (76%) were employed. Alcohol use was reported by 72% of clients for the 30 day period prior to program entry. Seven percent reported cocaine use and 14% said they used marijuana 30 days prior to entering the DUIL program.

Breath alcohol content readings were below .15 for 11% of second offenders who took the breathalyzer test and .20 or greater for 18%. Almost half (43%) refused to take the breathalyzer test, a 4% increase from FY '88 (39%). Three-quarters (74%) reported they had had two DUI arrests in their life and 90% reported two DUI convictions in the past six years.

Discussion

Admissions for first and second offender drunk drivers have decreased. Admissions to first offender driver alcohol education programs have decreased by 18% since FY '86. Second-offender 14-day DUIL admissions have dropped by 29% since FY '86. Even though admissions have decreased, demographic characteristics remain fairly stable between years for first and second offender drunk drivers, although breathalyzer test refusals have increased for both first and second offenders between FY '88 and FY '89.

Characteristics of first and second offenders are quite similar although some differences emerged. Clients admitted to first offender DAE programs were more likely to be women and to be employed than those admitted to second offender programs. Clients in second offender programs showed greater cocaine and marijuana use, and more clients refused the breathalyzer test at arrest.

Hopefully, decreased admissions to drunk driving programs reflects a decrease in the number of individuals driving under the influence of liquor in Massachusetts rather than simply a reduction in arrests. An evaluation of first offender drunk driving programs in Massachusetts suggests that clients surveyed in FY '88 were more impaired in their alcohol involvement, alcohol consumption, and attitudes toward drinking and driving than those studied in FY '87. If the more seriously impaired individuals who exhibit little control over their drinking and driving behavior are entering our treatment system, the Massachusetts model of intensive and lengthier driver alcohol education is particularly crucial at this time.

Table 1
Characteristics of Clients Admitted to

First and Second Offender DUIL Programs by Fiscal Year

Fiscal Year	Admissions	Mean Age	Percent Male	Percent Minority	Percent Married	Mean Education
First Offender Driver Alcohol Education						
85	20,925	31.1	86.5	7.3	25.2	12.3
86	20,357	31.3	86.0	7.9	25.1	12.4
87	21,027	31.3	86.4	8.8	24.3	12.4
88	18,971	31.2	86.2	10.1	23.0	12.4
89	16,751	31.3	84.7	10.6	22.5	12.4
Second Offender 14-day Residential DUIL Treatment						
85	4,229	31.3	92.6	8.1	21.7	11.9
86	5,651	31.4	92.8	8.5	20.2	11.9
87	4,556	31.5	91.8	8.3	20.6	11.9
88	4,283	32.1	91.7	10.4	20.4	11.9
89	3,998	31.8	91.0	9.7	20.4	11.9

Table 2
Characteristics of First and Second Offender
Drunk Drivers in Substance Abuse Treatment Services for FY '89
(In Percent)

Characteristics	1st Offender DAE Program (N=16,751)	2nd Offender 14-Day Program (N=3,998)
Sex		
Male	85	91
Female	15	9
Ethnic Background		
Black	3	2
Hispanic	4	3
White	89	90
Other	4	4
Age (Mean)	31 years	32 years
19 or less	7	2
20-29	45	48
30-39	28	33
40-49	12	12
50+	7	6
Education (In Years)	12	12
Marital Status		
Never Married	57	56
Married	22	20
Separated/Divorced/Widowed	21	23
Annual Income		
Less than $1,000	4	7
$ 1,000 to $ 7,499	11	10
$ 7,500 to $14,999	24	26
$15,000 or more	61	57
Employed	81	76
Alcohol Use	78	72
Cocaine Use	2	7
Marijuana Use	8	17
BAC	1.7	1.8
Breathalyzer Refusals	39	43

Admission Trends for
First and Second Offender Drunk Drivers

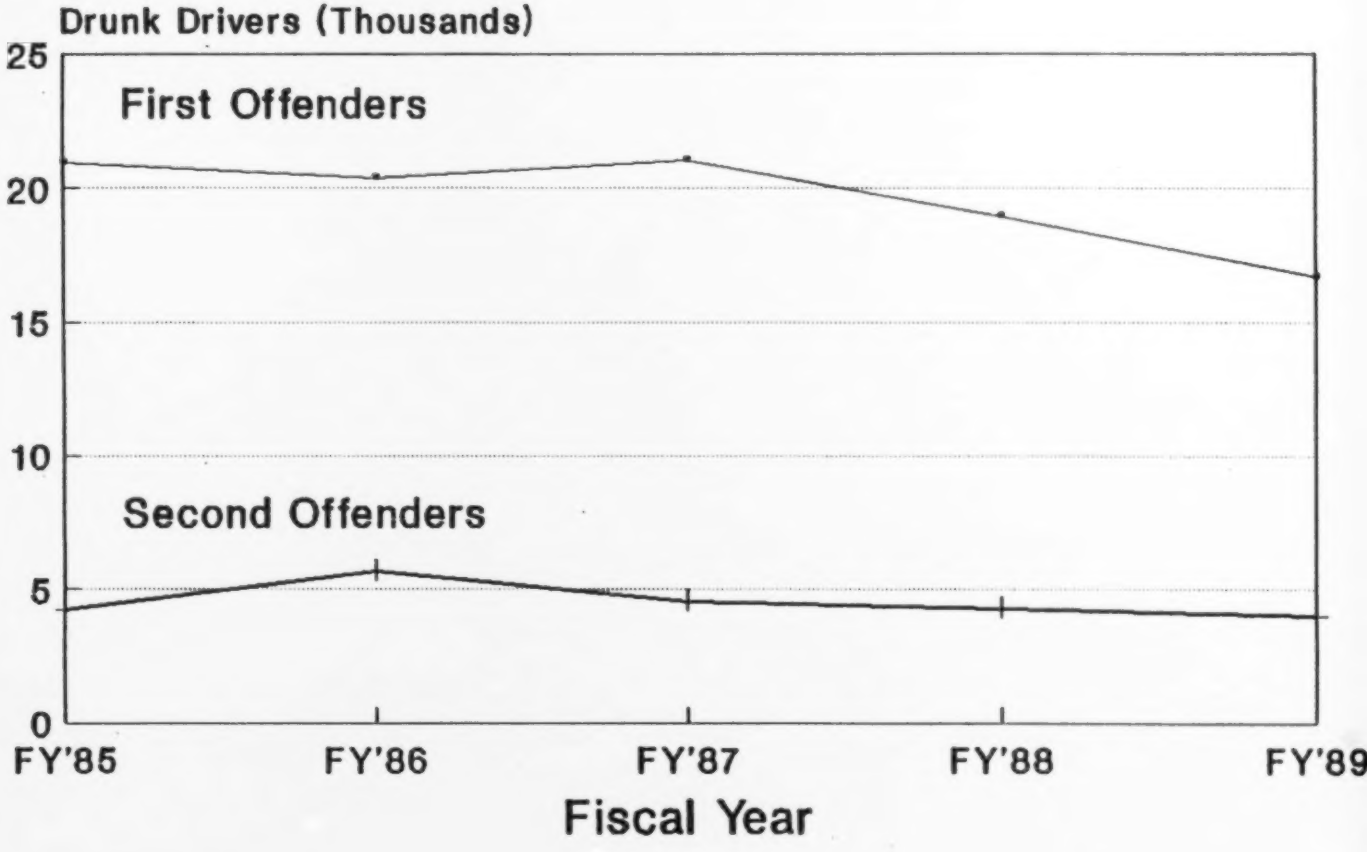

Figure 1